

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 32  
By Wilder

A RESOLUTION to honor Mr. James Harvey "Preacher" Shelton  
on the occasion of his retirement from the  
Somerville Bank and Trust Company.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor  
those outstanding citizens who in their years of work have performed with uncommon devotion  
and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, James Harvey "Preacher" Shelton is taking a much deserved retirement  
after 36 years of meritorious service with the Somerville Bank and Trust Company; and

WHEREAS, this native of Fayette County was nicknamed "Preacher" in first grade, when  
he played the part of "the Preacher" in a Tom Thumb wedding; and

WHEREAS, as a youth, Mr. Shelton attended Fayette County schools; he then  
completed two years of study at the University of Tennessee at Martin before earning his  
Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, demonstrating his loyalty to this great nation and to the pursuit of  
democracy across the globe, James "Preacher" Shelton served with great valor and alacrity in  
the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II; and

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WHEREAS, in 1952, Mr. Shelton was elected Fayette County Trustee, the duties of which office he executed with extraordinary fidelity, integrity, and acumen for 14 years; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of his illustrious tenure as Fayette County Trustee, James "Preacher" Shelton shifted his considerable talents to the Somerville Bank and Trust Company, where his exemplary tenure as President lasted from 1968 to 2001; he is retiring from his present duties as Chairman and CEO; and

WHEREAS, under the capable hand of Mr. Shelton, the bank has experienced enormous growth; when he commenced his employment with the company, it was an eight million dollar bank with only ten employees; Somerville Bank and Trust Company has since grown and prospered to become a 175 million dollar bank with 52 employees and three branches; and

WHEREAS, James H. Shelton's remarkable work has been noted and rewarded on a national level; Somerville Bank and Trust earned an impressive ranking of 16<sup>th</sup> out of 14,000 banks in the nation in a review of financial strength by the Federal Reserve Board and has been named one of the country's premier banks in terms of financial performance by the Bank Administration Institute; and

WHEREAS, much of Mr. Shelton's professional success is due to his remarkable ability to relate to and empathize with people from all walks of life; he is described by Shelton Wilder, a member of the Board of Directors at Somerville Bank and Trust Company, as "a country gentleman banker who loves to loan money to local people for their needs and to help his community and county"; and

WHEREAS, James "Preacher" Shelton is an active and important member of his profession and his community, participating in numerous professional and civic organizations, including the Board of the Tennessee Bankers Association (serving as President in 1983 and 1984), the Lions Club (having previously served as President), the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Directors of Agricenter International, the Board of Directors of State

Tech, the Masons, and the Shriners, and lending his support to the Boy Scouts of America and Little League Baseball; and

WHEREAS, a man who recognizes that cultural enhancement is of benefit to all, James H. Shelton has enthusiastically supported the beautification and preservation of the historic Somerville Square through various renovations to the bank building; and

WHEREAS, indicative of his love for the people of Somerville and Fayette County, James "Preacher" Shelton facilitated the exhibition of a cross on the city water tank; it serves as an inspiration and consolation to all on whom its beauty is graciously bestowed; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shelton's dedication to improving his community has been particularly noted by Fayette County Sheriff Bill G. Kelley, who depicts "Preacher" as "an outstanding, solid citizen [who] has worked hard to make Fayette County a better place to live and raise your family;" and

WHEREAS, James "Preacher" Shelton also contributes his time and numerous talents to the First United Methodist Church of Somerville, having served as Trustee, Church Treasurer, and Chairman of the Board, among other positions; and

WHEREAS, acting as a voice of integrity in society and reaching out with compassion to people whom life has treated unkindly, Mr. Shelton epitomizes the ideal of the humble Christian, dedicated public servant, and reliable friend and neighbor; his selfless and demonstrative faith has so impressed his former pastor that the Reverend Gordon Henderson calls James "Preacher" Shelton "one of the best men I have ever known"; and

WHEREAS, James H. Shelton exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to friends and family that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; he recognizes the immense value of intimate and enduring friendship and is grateful for the loving companionship he shares with his wife, Betty, their sons and daughters-in-law, Steve and his wife, Carol, and Joe and his wife, Dale, and their seven grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Mr. Shelton has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, integrity, and compassion, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his colleagues, employees, and clients; and

WHEREAS, James “Preacher” Shelton has served the Somerville Bank and Trust Company with distinction for over 36 years; he will forever be remembered for the valuable assistance he has rendered to the citizens of Somerville and Fayette County; and

WHEREAS, it is our privilege to honor Mr. Shelton for his uncommon devotion and service to the banking industry and to his community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we recognize James Harvey “Preacher” Shelton for his honorable service to the people of Fayette County, commend him on his many years of professional excellence, applaud his commitment to family and community, and express our best wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.